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PARENT-CHILD AFFINITY AS PERCEIVED BY CHILDREN

by

Earlene E. Miller

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

Family and Child Development

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Earlene E. Miller

Earlene E. Miller

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ABSTRACT

Parent-Child Affinity as Perceived by Children

by

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Utah State University, 1972

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Department: Family and Child Development

Parental preference of girls and boys was studied in this research. Situations of recreation, personal and moral needs, places and things, and social events constituted the range of choices in the children's selection for one parent or the other as a companion for the activity.

Ninety children (30 preschool, 30 third graders, and 30 sixth graders) were tested individually by an interview schedule. The Parent-Affinity Perception Scale developed for this research contained 30 items. Children were asked to choose "Mother" or "Father" as a response for each item.

The findings indicated a significant difference in preference for "Mother" rather than "Father," with girls consistently choosing the mother. Third-grade boys selected the mother more often than the father; however, preschool and sixth-grade boys preferred the father for more of the items. In comparison of the three age groups, mother was perceived as the preferred parent in all except the preschool group.

The Parent-Affinity Perception Scale scores of the group's 90 subjects were ranked in the high and low quartiles in order to analyze which items were discriminating children's perceptions for parental preference. Analyses by chi square found 26 of the 30 items indicated a significant difference in parental preference at or beyond the .05 level of confidence.

(64 pages)

INTRODUCTION

Origin of Problem

A child's family has a special relationship which has many effects on his life. Many phases of the parent-child relationship have not been studied or have only briefly been studied in the history of research in child development. Research has often examined only segments of a family--the mother and child relationship and excluded mention of the father. Sex-role identifications of children to a masculine or feminine role have been studied extensively. A child's relationship to his peer group or siblings is another area where research has been done. Much of the research has been investigated through the parents' records and reactions rather than the perceptions of children.

The research on perception of parent-child affinity is brief. Many studies have confined their work to one age group or to a limited area of parent-child interaction. Trends in socialization of children within a family have changed throughout the years. What associations with a parent are perceived important to children at various ages? Is there a difference in parental preference of boys and girls? Will questions concerning a child's behavior and activities indicate a preference for a parent or a sense of security in identifying with one parent? Specifically, can a perception of preference to a parent be determined in young children?

In early studies of parent-child relationships, many contained the suggestion that parental preference was based on unconscious sexual desires among sons for their mothers and daughters for their fathers. Others see the involvement and time association with mothers and female elementary school teachers influencing children of both sexes to prefer the mother. Still others find the child of a parent related to the identification of sex-role. Research leads to a question as to whether there is an attachment or closer relationship with one specific parent according to the child's developmental stage, sex, age, or other events in a child's life.

Through conversations with other people and reactions to personal experiences, the investigator became aware that children perceive parents and relationships to their parents in a variety of ways.

Children think of their parents mostly in terms of a person to person relationship. A parent as perceived by the child is, thus, dominantly one who take me places, does things for me, makes things for me, etc. (Meltzer, 1935, p. 261)

It is recognized that many factors may determine a parental choice of children, and it was the object of this study to examine children's preference for their parents in a variety of activities.

Problem

Through the years, several changes in socialization patterns have occurred which affect the family. More mothers have become employed outside the home. Families are more mobile. Fathers' occupational positions often

require them to be away from home for periods of time. Children are maturing at an earlier age. Sex roles and identification patterns are not as clearly differentiated for boys and girls as the patterns in previous generations. These changes point out the need for research to investigate how the elements have affected children.

The child has repeatedly encountered new experiences and new perceptions. It is questioned if parental preferences of children have remained stable during this transition period. Many day-to-day involvements of children with their parents are considered to affect the parent-child relationship. These influences suggested a new examination of children's perceptions of parent-child affinity.

Purpose

A gap exists in child development literature in studying the parent-child affinity perceived by children. A wide realm of situations involving recreation, personal and moral needs, places and things, and social activities constituted the range of choices in a child's selection for one parent or the other as a companion for the activity. This study focused on the comparison of which parent was selected for most activities or associations by children of preschool, third-grade and sixth-grade levels. One of the goals of the cross-sectional study was to determine the frequency with which choices occur and trends at each age level. Another objective was to determine whether or not the sex of a child affects his choice of parental preference.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in parental preference as perceived by children.
2. There is no significant difference in parent-child affinity in comparison of preschool, third-grade, and sixth-grade children.
3. There is no significant difference between boys and girls in their parental choice.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This review of literature was formulated to investigate parental preferences as perceived by children and factors influencing parent-child affinity. Rather than including all areas in the topic of parent-child relationships, children's perceptions of the relationship served as the focus of the review. Adolescents have often been subjects used to determine parental preference, and these studies are cited. Methods or techniques used to obtain information concerning parental preference were also examined. The framework includes research relative to sex-role identification of boys and girls as an effect of their perception. Previous findings of parental preferences have given direction to the present investigation.

A child shows a preference for one sibling over another; he also prefers one parent to another. The preference may be so slight as to be barely recognizable by the child or by his parents, or it may be so marked that no one can fail to recognize it. Psychoanalysts explain the child's preference for one parent in terms of the Oedipus theory--that is an innate, unconscious sexual desire among sons for their mothers and among daughters for their fathers. If this were true, it would mean that the child's preference would always be the parent of the opposite sex. To date, studies have not revealed this to be true. (Hurlock, 1964, p. 690)

Studies by Livson (1966) and several other researchers indicate that even young children are very responsive in giving perceptions of parents. Schvaneveldt, Fryer, and Ostler (1970) studied children three to five years of age in regard to perceptions and concepts relating to "goodness" and

"badness" in mothers and fathers. The results illustrated the importance of sex-role identification in children's perceptions of their needs in relation to their parents.

Literature indicates that mothers and fathers are often the sources of information for research regarding the parent-child relationship. Sigel (1964) writes that perceptual studies have been undertaken to determine how children perceive, what information they obtain from the environment, and the kinds of stimuli they are attended and how these change with age. Serot and Teevan (1961) report there is very little agreement between parental perception of the parent-child relationship and the child's perception of the same.

Younger children are exposed to a feminine atmosphere at home and at school for longer periods of time. Parsons and Bales (1955) define the mother as more expressive because of biological functions. The father, therefore, exhibits the alternative instrumental direction. Rogers (1969) indicates that boys receive the same education, similar tasks in a modern home as girls, and life simply makes sex differentiation less necessary than formerly when behaviors were characteristically feminine or masculine orientated. However, definite preferences exist in young children for one or the other sex roles according to Brown (1958).

Parental identification refers to the internalization of personality characteristics of one's own parent and to unconscious reactions similar to that parent. Thus theoretically, an individual might be well identified with the appropriate sex-role generally and yet poorly identified with his same-sex

parent specifically. Both male and female infants were hypothesized to learn to identify with the mother. Boys but not girls must shift from this initial identification with the mother to masculine identification. The girl has the same-sex parental model (the mother) with her more.

Females tend to be more dependent than males on the external content of a perceptual situation and hesitate to deviate from the given. (Lynn, 1965, p. 273)

According to Emmerich (1959), sex of the child was found to have no significant effect upon the measuring of discrimination of parent and child roles. Older children did not make sharper sex-role discriminations than younger children. Livson (1966) stated that social learning theory argues that boys are more likely than girls to identify with the same-sex parent. A high level of maternal affection and involvement was directly related to the child's developing a strong involvement with the mother. This was true for both sexes, but only the daughter was similarly responsive to the father's strong involvement.

Parents employ patterns of differential training of the sexes according to Komarovsky (1966). There is an attempt by the parents for greater attachment and dependence of a girl upon her family of orientation. Brim (1957) suggests that fathers place more pressure on sons to be progressive.

Kagan (1964) found boys who have a strong identification with a father produced more frequent evidence of a warm father-son relationship than did weak identified subjects. His study also indicated that information in sex-role identification did not seem to indicate whether there was an attachment or close relationship to a specific parent at developmental stages.

There was no measurable relationship between the parental attitudes and the personality adjustment characteristics of the children in Burchinal's (1958) study. However, in interviews with children about their day's activities, Cox (1961) found that a positive attitude toward the parent of the same sex aids competent and warm relationships with peers.

According to Cox (1970), children's perceptions of parents vary with age, sex and culture. Although there are greater limitations on girls, girls are reported to be more favorably orientated toward their parents and have better relations with them. Crain and Stamm (1965) state that children whose fathers are consistently present in the home perceive the father as more democratic than do children whose fathers are regularly absent. The PALS Test results also suggested that absence of the father made the mother significantly less loving to the child.

Hawkes, Burchinal and Gardner (1957) indicate that boys are more critical than girls of their home conditions. Both boys and girls have been found to have more favorable than unfavorable attitudes toward parents. Mothers were uniformly rated more favorably than fathers by fifth-grade children. Lynn (1961) found that girls show a more pronounced improvement in relations to the father than to the mother in adolescence. The study indicates that in identification, college males are not significantly closer to their fathers than their mothers. Women were closer to mothers than were the men; women were also closer to their mothers than to their fathers.

The closer identification of males with their mothers than their fathers will be revealed most frequently in personality variables which are not clearly sex-typed, rather than on those which are judged to be masculine or feminine. (Lynn, 1964, p. 468)

Serot and Teevan (1961) found the well-adjusted child perceives his parent-child relationship as relatively happy and close to the theoretical ideal, and the maladjusted child's perception of his parent-child relationship is far from ideal. Similar results were given in a study of delinquents by Medinnus (1965) using the Parent-Child Relations Questionnaire developed by Roe and Siegelman. There was also noted a greater difference between perceptions of fathers and mothers. The delinquents had more unfavorable attitudes toward their fathers than toward their mothers.

Another study by Longstreth and Rice (1964) found well-adjusted boys were more identified with parents than were the aggressive and under-achieving boys. Descriptions of parents as high in love and control correlated with parental identification of well-adjusted boys.

One of the earlier studies by Simpson (1935) used children's reactions to pictures and stories to estimate parental preferences. Preferences for the mother were expressed by 70 percent of the girls and 61 percent of the boys. The father was favored by 22 percent of the boys and 28 percent of the girls, with the exception of five, six-year olds, among whom 60 percent preferred fathers.

Hawkes, Burchinal and Gardner (1957) report that children of most ages choose the mother as the most preferred parent. Kagan, Hosken and Watson

(1961) and Droppleman and Shaefer (1963) say that generally the mother is seen in a more favorable light than the father. She is considered friendlier, less strict, less punitive, less threatening and more nurturing. The father is considered to often display contrasting characteristics. Using projective techniques in gaining responses to pictures, Lickorish (1966) found fathers tend to treat their boys moderately or rather severely. The mothers tend to be lenient or severe, not moderate.

In summarizing a research project of problem children it states that the most significant finding probably is that the attitudes of fathers are at least as intimately related as maternal attitudes to the occurrence and form of behavior problems in children. The popular choice of mothers as a focus of research attention and the general clinical tendency to offer psychotherapy to mothers rather than fathers of disturbed children are usually rationalized by noting that mothers generally spend more time with their children than fathers do, and by speculating that mother-child relationships are more intimate affairs than those between fathers and children. Whatever the validity of these assumptions, only the final effect is of fundamental concern, and now we have reason to believe that the emphasis in this effect is not as one-sided as it has previously appeared. (Peterson et al., 1965, p. 175)

Mussen and Rutherford (1965) contend that identification with a strong parent can be an important source of security to a child. Some preferences are based on particular situations. According to Mott (1954), the four and five-year-old child looks to his mother rather than to his father for recreation, clothing and aid in times of pain. Meltzer (1935) in using a free association interview method, and Meissner (1965) found mother outranked father on items that were emotional, manual and physical. Father outranked mother

on responses which were social, economic and intellectual. Mother averaged a larger percentage of reciprocal love responses and father more pride reactions.

Britton and Britton (1971) made a comparison study of Finnish and American children in regard to their perception of parents. All children tended to view the mother more frequently than the father as a source of understanding and comfort, and all the groups saw the father more often than the mother as dominating, punitive, and fear provoking.

Finch (1955) expressed a preference for using pictorial interviews and doll play rather than direct questioning in data collection when studying children's perceptions of parent-child relationships. Children perceive the mother to be concerned with housekeeping and care of the children while the father was considered primarily as the economic provider in research done by Finch (1955) and Johannis (1971).

In family drawings, Mott (1954) observed that children placed the mother in the center of the family. When asked who would most likely be involved in family activities, both four and five-year-old boys and girls chose the mother more often than the father.

Breznitz and Kugelmass (1965 and 1966) tested instrumentality (discipline, training and decisions) and expressivity (emotional support) in children's perceptions of parents to find if the same-sex parent was perceived as more instrumental and parent of the opposite sex as more expressive. The first

part of the hypothesis was accepted, but mothers were perceived as more expressive. The study was repeated and confirmed by kibbutz children's perceptions of parents by Breznitz and Kugelmass (1966).

A duplicate study by Dahlem (1970) was designed to test further the Breznitz and Kugelmass' predictions regarding which parent would be named for each item regardless of whether family or the self was the frame of reference. The eight-item questionnaire aimed at tapping adolescents' perceptions of their parents included the following questions:

1. If you and one parent were going to work on a project, and you wanted a step by step outline of the procedure to be followed, with which parent would you choose to work? ____ (S-I) Mother Father
2. Which of your parents knows more? ____ (F-I) Mother Father
3. Which is more considerate of other people's feelings? ____ (F-E) Mother Father
4. Which demands more of you? ____ (S-I) Mother Father
5. Which generally takes your side in arguments? ____ (S-E) Mother Father
6. Which makes decisions at home? ____ (S-E) Mother Father
7. Which is nicer to you? ____ (S-E) Mother Father
8. Which is kinder? ____ (F-E) Mother Father

Item #1 was not used by Breznitz and Kugelmass. The designation in parentheses following each item is the family-self frame of reference and Instrumentality-Expressivity classification given the item by Breznitz and Kugelmass. This designation did not appear on the respondents' questionnaires. (Dahlem, 1970, pp. 188-189)

Generally, Dahlem's study pointed out both male and female respondents tended to answer "Father" to assumed instrumentality and "Mother" to assumed expressivity. The mother was more often named for items three and eight and fathers for items two and six. Items one and four were named

by like-sex parent, and items five and seven named the mother more often than father.

Lynn's (1970) test of parental preference placed children in seven play situations. The two, three, and four year olds were asked which parent they would like to have join them in each of the activities. Analysis revealed that the boys significantly preferred the father to the mother. Girls showed no consistent parental preference for the total sample; however, a significant preference for the father at age two and for the mother at age four was acknowledged.

Brown's (1958) It Scale claimed to show boys prefer to be a daddy when It grows up. Younger girls also expressed a father preference. Fifth-grade girls expressed a mother preference.

Kagan and Lemkin (1960) conducted a study to gain information on perception of parents with respect to nurturance, punitiveness, source of fear and competence. First, children were asked indirect questions while being shown pictures:

1. Who is the strongest one? 2. Who gives the most presents?
 3. Who spansks the most? 4. Who is the boss at home? 5. Who does the child like the best? 6. Who gets mad at the child?
 7. Who is the smartest? 8. If the child did something wrong and both mommy and daddy were home, who would punish the (boy) (girl)? 9. Who is nicer to the child? 10. Who is the child more scared of? 11. Who tells the child what to do all of the time? 12. Who kisses the child the most? 13. Who would the child want to be like when (he) (she) grows up?
- (Kagan and Lemkin, 1960, p. 441)

The children were then shown ten different pictures illustrating various activities that usually involved a parent, but the parent was not illustrated. The child was asked to name who was missing from the picture. Finally, the children were asked the 13 questions (in a different order) in a direct method phrased in terms of the child and his own parents.

The results offered further evidence that fathers are seen as more fear arousing, more competent, and more punitive than mothers. Mothers were seen as "nicer" by both sexes. The findings also showed boys and girls chose the same-sex parent as their model to emulate and the parent they liked best. Girls stated a desire to be like the mother but perceived the father as stronger and wiser. It was suggested that girls have anxiety because their identification model is perceived as the least competent of the two parents.

In a study of children's behavior involvement with parents, Livson (1966) found that significantly more sons than daughters showed high involvement with their fathers. Daughters, significantly more often than sons, were strongly involved with the mother.

Bossard and Boll (1955) claimed a child's parental attitude is determined by the child's age, position in the family, treatment by his parents, parental attitudes toward him, the child's personality, cultural attitudes toward the relative importance of the mother and father, and many other factors. Thus, they infer, it becomes apparent that parental preferences are learned; there is no evidence of a congenital preference for either parent.

That there is no such congenital preference is verified by the fact that parental preferences are not persistent. Rather, according to Harris and Tseng (1957), they change from one age to another and one circumstance to another. In general, however, there is a tendency for young children of both sexes to prefer the mother to the father when they are young. Among older children there is an increase in affection for the father, but the mother remains the favorite.

The reasons for the preferred parent are summarized by Hurlock (1964). These reasons are: time spent with the parent, care of the child, expression of affection, discipline, parental expectations, parental favoritism, status of parents, and idealism of parents. When they express a preference, however, young children prefer the mother for some activity such as cooking or reading, and the father for others, especially for playing games. When services are required of parents, the father is preferred in case of broken toys or need for money and the mother for help in case of illness, trouble in school, loss of something or hurt feelings.

Fathers may have as great affection for their children, but they often fail to show it in ways the child can understand according to Kagan, Hosken, and Watson (1961) and Peterson et al. (1959). Children interpret punishment as lack of affection and prefer the parent who appears to like them better according to Schvaneveldt, Fryer, and Ostler (1970).

Hurlock (1964) reported when boys and girls are in the same family, the mother's preference is usually for the boys. Therefore, a boy begins to show

a greater preference for his mother, while a girl tends to prefer the father. It is also acknowledged that every child has ideals for his parents and for his relationship with them. The parent who more closely approaches his ideal at the time, other factors being equal, is usually the favored parent.

Summary of Literature Review

Although most observations cited in parent-child relationships indicate the mother as being the preferred parent of children, the majority of studies have investigated only a small portion of the total parent-child relationship. This is verified by the decade review of research done by Walters and Stinnett (1971). Also, many of the studies have used a single variable such as sex of the subjects, one age group, or one specific activity to examine the problem of parental preference. Social changes necessitate the examination of earlier findings and implications.

Direct questioning, doll-play, pictorial techniques and interviewing have been used as methods of data collection for assessing parental preference. Few of the measuring instruments have been reused. It has been a purpose of the review to study these devices to enable the development of a more comprehensive measuring instrument to be used for boys and girls of various ages.

Since previous research was limited for younger children and some of the findings differed, it was considered beneficial to further test children's perception of parent-child affinity. Parent-child relationships are complex,

and gaps exist in children's perceptions concerning a number of areas of associations with parents. This research instituted a simulated longitudinal design to investigate more completely the parental preferences of children in regard to a greater variety of parent-child activities.

PROCEDURE

Sample

The 90 children in the study consisted of 30 preschool, 30 third-grade, and 30 sixth-grade subjects. As shown in Table 1, children's ages ranged from 3 years and 11 months to 5 years and 4 months in the preschool, 8 years and 7 months to 9 years and 3 months in the third grade, and 11 years and 5 months to 12 years and 6 months in the sixth grade. The mean age for pre-school children was 4 years and 9 months, third grade was 8 years and 11 months, and sixth grade was 12 years and 2 months. Each group was made up of 15 boys and 15 girls.

A criterion was that children must be living with both parents in order that a choice between mother and father could more realistically be made for the information desired. The children were selected in a systematic random fashion from a list of children in the Child Development Laboratory at Utah State University and an elementary school in Logan, Utah.

The group selected were considered representative of elementary children in the area. The socioeconomic class of the children ranged from upper-lower to upper-middle class. The children's parents were in occupations from working class to professional positions. All children in the study were Caucasian.

Table 1. Number of children in study by grade, age and sex.

	Preschool	Third Grade	Sixth Grade	Total
Boys	15	15	15	45
Girls	<u>15</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>45</u>
Total	30	30	30	90
Age Range	3 years, 11 months - 5 years, 4 months	8 years, 7 months - 9 years, 3 months	11 years, 5 months - 12 years, 6 months	
Age Mean	4 years, 9 months	8 years, 11 months	12 years, 2 months	

Development of the Parent-Affinity Perception Scale

Instruments used in other studies concerning children's perceptions of parental preference were reviewed to examine their construction and content. Several items depicting occasions for children's associations with parents were then formulated by the investigator and major professor and written in the form of questions. The items for the scale were written using activities and language which would be suitable for obtaining answers from preschool children as well as older children. All questions were considered to be neuter. The response categories were a forced choice of "Mother" or "Father."

From these items, the investigator selected 28 to be used in the measuring instrument for determining parent-child affinity. The investigator's committee reviewed the Parent-Affinity Perception Scale and agreed to its content. The scale was used in a pilot study of 18 children, six children at each age level, to determine if the scale was understood and valid. The interview schedule was given individually to the children. The children were able to select a response without much difficulty. A retest was given to check for reliability with the results being reported in the section on Reliability.

It was decided that the scale could be used with the age groups using an interview schedule, and that the items would discriminate parental preferences of children. The investigator and major professor considered adding two items to the scale. These two items were informally asked of preschool children to determine if they would also obtain adequate responses. Since they reflected

differentiated responses, items 29 and 30 in the Parent-Affinity Perception Scale were included. (See Appendix.)

Administration of the Parent-Affinity Perception Scale

Permission was obtained to use children in the Child Development Laboratory at Utah State University and an elementary school in Logan, Utah. Also prior to testing, the investigator visited the Child Development Laboratory in order to become better acquainted with the children and to develop rapport for the interview session. The investigator did not deem this step to be necessary in the other two age groups. After receiving the cooperation of the teachers at the preschool group and grades three and six, an interview was held with each individual child.

The Parent-Affinity Perception Scale was used as an interview schedule for the data collection. The investigator interviewed each child in a private room at each school during the months of March and April, 1972. The purpose of the study was briefly explained. It took approximately ten minutes to individually administer the interview schedule to each child. As each question was asked and the child responded by answering "Mother" or "Father," the investigator circled the proper category response on the scale. The items were asked of each child in the same sequence pattern and in the same manner.

At the first of the interview, several of the children would reply "Both" rather than "Mother" or "Father." When this occurred, the investigator

would then ask the subject to make a choice. All of the children in the sample were cooperative in giving discriminating responses to the 30 items.

Validity

The Parent-Affinity Perception Scale was examined by the investigator's committee. The scale was judged to have face validity in that items had a content of interest for age and sex of the children, were understandable, and would obtain a discriminative response for parental preference. The instrument was used in a pilot study. Modifications of items were made as a result of the pilot study, and the scale was believed to be sufficiently valid for purposes of the research.

Item analysis using the upper and lower-quartile responses was the discriminating facility used to measure validity. According to the chi-square tests, differences in the majority of responses on items were significant at the .05 level of confidence. Therefore, it was evidenced that the Parent-Affinity Perception Scale did measure the parental preference of children.

Reliability

A pretest of the measuring instrument was given to 18 children in a pilot study to determine if children could understand and specify a preference for "Mother" or "Father" on the Parent-Affinity Perception Scale. A retest was given to the subjects involved 17 days later to check the reliability of the scale.

The test-retest comparison showed a percentage of agreement of children's responses at 92.8 percent stability indicating that the measuring device was consistent.

Analysis of Data

After the interview schedules were completed, each individual's Parent-Affinity Perception Scale was examined and responses of "Mother" and "Father" were totaled. Responses were compared between boys and girls and between the preschool, third-grade and sixth-grade groups. Responses were tabulated for each item on the scale. The upper-quartile responses for 22 subjects and the lower-quartile responses for 22 subjects were tested by item analysis to determine their ability to measure parental preference. Chi square was the statistical method used to analyze the data with statistical significance being determined at the .05 level of confidence.

FINDINGS

The presentation and discussion of findings is in five sections. The first section contains findings in assessment of the first hypothesis: there is no significant difference in parental preference as perceived by children. Table 2 indicates the respondents' choice for "Mother" and "Father" on the Parent-Affinity Perception Scale. Table 3 shows the responses according to sex and age levels of the respondents. Table 4 explains the responses according to sex and age for each item in the scale.

The second section presents findings in discussion of the hypothesis: there is no significant difference in parent-child affinity in comparison of preschool, third-grade and sixth-grade children. Section three encompasses material for the third hypothesis: there is no significant difference between boys and girls in their parental choice. Tables 3 and 4 illustrate information in the study of these hypotheses.

Section four gives the item analysis of the Parent-Affinity Perception Scale between high and low scoring quartiles for subjects. Table 5 shows which items were successful in distinguishing a parental preference as perceived by children.

A summary of the findings and a descriptive analysis of the hypotheses of the study is found in the last section.

Differential Perception of Mother and Father

The data were first analyzed according to the total number of the 90 children answering either "Mother" or "Father" to the 30-item Parent-Affinity Perception Scale. (See Table 2.) The number of responses selected by children according to sex and age are shown in Table 3. Responses to each item according to sex and age are shown in Table 4. The results showed 55.2 percent of the responses in favor of "Mother" and 44.8 percent responses in favor of "Father." These findings lend support to previous studies by indicating children's perception of mother as the preferred parent.

As Harris and Tseng (1957) and Hurlock (1964) proposed, children's perception of parental preference do change from one circumstance to another. The data in Table 4 revealed that the majority of items (2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13, 14, 16, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 29, and 30) indicated a preference for "Mother" to be a companion in that activity or relationship. Conversely, items (3, 8, 10, 12, 20, 26, and 28) were selected for "Father." Two items (1 and 15) received equal responses for mother and father.

The children's preference for "Father" for games and swimming as measured by items 17 and 20 contrasts with Mott's (1954) study who found the mother was preferred for recreation. (See Table 4.) Mott and Kagan and Lemkin (1960) indicated children preferred the mother in needs for sickness and pain, and this was confirmed in the present study. (See Table 4, items 4 and 25.)

Table 2. Children's Parent-Affinity Perception Scale scores in ranked order of responses to "Mother" and "Father."

	Number of children	"Mother"	"Father"
	1	30	0
	2	28	2
	1	27	3
	2	26	4
	1	25	5
	6	23	7
	3	22	8
	2	21	9
	6	20	10
	7	19	11
	10	18	12
	8	17	13
	5	16	14
	8	15	15
	4	14	16
	5	13	17
	1	12	18
	5	11	19
	3	10	20
	3	9	21
	2	7	23
	2	6	24
	2	5	25
	1	4	26
Total	90	1490	1210
Percent		55.2	44.8

Table 3. Number of items chosen by subjects according to sex and age of children.

	"Mother"	"Father"
Preschool Age:		
Girls	236	214
Boys	<u>198</u>	<u>252</u>
Total	434	466
Third Grade Level:		
Girls	256	194
Boys	<u>273</u>	<u>177</u>
Total	529	371
Sixth Grade Level:		
Girls	305	145
Boys	<u>222</u>	<u>228</u>
Total	527	373

Table 4. Response frequency of children's perceptions to Parent-Affinity Perception Scale items.

Item		<u>Preschool</u>		<u>Third Grade</u>		<u>Sixth Grade</u>		Total
		Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	
1. If you wanted money to spend, whom would you ask, your mother or your father for the money?	Mother	4	8	7	11	8	10	45
	Father	11	7	8	4	7	5	45
2. If you needed a parent to come to school with you, whom would you ask to go, your mother or father?	Mother	11	8	13	9	13	11	65
	Father	4	7	2	6	2	4	25
3. If you were to take a plane trip, would you rather have your mother or your father go with you?	Mother	6	4	7	1	12	4	34
	Father	9	11	8	14	3	11	56
4. If you were sick and needed to see a doctor, would you want your mother or your father to take you to the doctor?	Mother	8	8	10	13	14	10	63
	Father	7	7	5	2	1	5	27
5. Whom do you think is the happier person, your mother or your father?	Mother	12	7	6	13	6	9	53
	Father	3	8	9	2	9	6	37
6. If you were unhappy, would you rather talk to your mother or your father about what is making you sad?	Mother	8	7	9	8	14	12	58
	Father	7	8	6	7	1	3	32
7. If you wanted to ask for permission to do something, whom would you ask, your mother or your father?	Mother	7	6	11	8	8	9	49
	Father	8	9	4	7	7	6	41

Table 4. (Continued)

Item		<u>Preschool</u>		<u>Third Grade</u>		<u>Sixth Grade</u>		Total
		Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	
8. If you needed help with work, would you ask your mother or your father to help you?	Mother	8	7	4	7	7	3	36
	Father	7	8	11	8	8	12	54
9. If you knew a secret, to whom would you rather tell it, your mother or your father?	Mother	6	7	8	12	12	9	54
	Father	9	8	7	3	3	6	36
10. Whom do you feel would help you more if you were in trouble, your mother or your father?	Mother	10	4	7	6	11	6	44
	Father	5	11	8	9	4	9	46
11. Would you rather go to the supermarket to buy food with your mother or your father?	Mother	9	9	11	13	11	11	64
	Father	6	6	4	2	4	4	26
12. If only one of your parents could go on a special trip to the moon, whom would you rather go with you, your mother or father?	Mother	6	3	1	2	5	1	18
	Father	9	12	14	13	10	14	72
13. If you wanted to know how to be very happy, whom would you ask, your mother or father?	Mother	7	7	13	13	12	9	61
	Father	8	8	2	2	3	6	29
14. If you had to stay home all day with either your mother or father, whom would you choose to stay with you?	Mother	6	5	10	13	14	12	60
	Father	9	10	5	2	1	3	30

Table 4. (Continued)

Item		<u>Preschool</u>		<u>Third Grade</u>		<u>Sixth Grade</u>		Total
		Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	
15. With whom would you rather go for a walk, your mother or your father?	Mother	11	4	10	7	9	4	45
	Father	4	11	5	8	6	11	45
16. Whom would you rather have read stories to you, your mother or father?	Mother	6	8	11	11	13	8	50
	Father	9	7	4	4	2	7	40
17. With whom would you rather go swimming, your mother or father?	Mother	7	3	6	2	8	1	27
	Father	8	12	9	13	7	14	63
18. If you were going to visit grandparents, would you rather go to your mother's parents or your father's parents' home?	Mother	7	6	13	10	7	9	52
	Father	8	9	2	5	8	6	38
19. Would you rather have your mother or your father go shopping with you for toys?	Mother	11	7	5	13	10	5	47
	Father	4	8	10	2	5	10	43
20. If you wanted someone to play a game with you, would you ask your mother or father to play?	Mother	5	2	3	7	5	6	28
	Father	10	13	12	8	10	9	62
21. If you did something wrong, would you rather have your mother or your father correct you?	Mother	7	7	8	11	12	9	54
	Father	8	8	7	4	3	6	36

Table 4. (Continued)

Item		Preschool		Third Grade		Sixth Grade		Total
		Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	
22. Whom do you want to be like when you grow up, your mother or your father?	Mother	10	2	13	2	15	2	46
	Father	5	13	2	13	0	13	44
23. Whom do your friends like best, their mother or their father?	Mother	9	10	11	12	7	10	60
	Father	6	5	4	3	8	5	30
24. If you were swearing, whom would you rather have hear you, your mother or your father?	Mother	9	9	8	13	9	9	57
	Father	6	6	7	2	6	6	33
25. If you awoke during the night feeling sick, would you rather have your mother or your father help you?	Mother	8	10	14	12	14	11	69
	Father	7	5	1	3	1	4	21
26. If you went to mail a letter, whom would you like to go to the post office with you, your mother or your father?	Mother	7	10	5	7	6	4	39
	Father	8	5	10	8	9	11	51
27. Whom would you like to take you and your friends to a picnic, your mother or your father?	Mother	7	9	8	9	12	5	50
	Father	8	6	7	6	3	10	40

Table 4. (Continued)

Item		<u>Preschool</u>		<u>Third Grade</u>		<u>Sixth Grade</u>		Total
		Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	
28. Whom would you rather have take you to the pet shop, your mother or your father?	Mother	8	8	5	5	6	4	36
	Father	7	7	10	10	9	11	54
29. Who is the best parent to you, your mother or your father?	Mother	6	7	11	10	12	8	54
	Father	9	8	4	5	3	7	36
30. Whom do you believe loves you the most, your mother or your father?	Mother	10	6	10	13	12	12	63
	Father	5	9	5	2	3	3	27

"Mother" was selected in more items associated with discipline and awareness of swearing. (See Table 4, items 21 and 24.) This would confirm the findings of Britton and Britton (1971), Kagan, Hosken, and Watson (1961) and Droppleman and Shaefer (1963) which showed the mother as more understanding and less punitive. It was of interest to note that children gave nearly equal responses for "Mother" and "Father" as the parent who would help them if they were in trouble. (See Table 4, item 10.)

"Mother" was chosen as the parent who was perceived as being happier and the one who would counsel on happiness. (See Table 4, items 5, 6, and 13.)

Children perceived "Mother" as the best parent to them and the one who was believed to love them the most. (See Table 4, items 29 and 30.) These findings correspond to those of Breznitz and Kugelmass (1965), Dahlem (1970), Kagan, Hosken and Watson (1961), and Peterson et al. (1959).

Soon after one boy began the interview, he said, "I only like my mother. I'll choose her for all the questions." But as the interview proceeded, he was surprised to see how many responses he made in preference for his father.

Children may have perceived the behavior specified in an item belonging to one parental role or a quality of a parent's behavior (Dahlem, 1970, p. 193). A large proportion of responses for "Mother" were chosen for going with the child to school, helping in case of sickness and going to the supermarket. (See Table 4, items 2, 4 11, and 25.) "Father" was named

by a majority of children for items concerning associations of going on a special trip to the moon, swimming and playing games. (See Table 4, items 12, 17 and 20.) Even though the items were judged to be neuter, children may have perceived them as being related to the sex role of one parent or the other.

During the interview schedule, some of the children responded to an item by answering "Both" rather than "Mother" or "Father." They were requested to make a choice for one parent or the other and did so, but at least for some items, many children may have actually had an equal preference for either parent. In this context, the father would not be unfavorably perceived by children in comparison to the mother.

Age Differences

In comparison with the preschool, the third-grade and sixth-grade groups more often selected a preference for mother rather than father. Table 3 pointed out that the preschool children had more responses indicating a preference for "Father." This is contrary to findings in some studies which report the mother as the most preferred parent, especially by younger children. The third and sixth-grade groups' responses show similar totals in selecting "Mother" for their parental preference. This study dealt with the children's perceptions of parental preference; reasons for the preference were not part of the research design.

Sex Differences

Responses according to sex are shown in Tables 3 and 4. Girls consistently selected "Mother" in response to the Parent-Affinity Perception Scale items. The girls in the older age groups expressed more choices for distinguishing "Mother" as the parental preference than those in the younger age groups.

Third-grade boys gave a majority of responses in favor of "Mother" as their parental preference; in fact, their maternal responses were more pronounced than were the girls' responses at this age. Boys in the preschool group showed a definite pattern in choosing "Father" in response to the items. Whereas, sixth-grade boys preferred father but the selection was not as pronounced. There was no evidence for reasons why the perceived relationship changed from a father preference in the preschool boys to a mother preference for boys in the third grade and back to a slight preference for father in the sixth-grade group.

Findings for item 22 in Table 4 indicate children generally chose the same-sex parent to model and emulate. These results compare to the same trend noted in research by Livson (1966) and Kagan and Lemkin (1960).

Item Analysis of Parent-Affinity Perception Scale

Data in Table 4 reveal the differences in children's responses to the Parent-Affinity Perception Scale. The item analysis is broken down according to sex and age of the children.

Children's scale scores were ranked from high to low in reporting a parental preference. Table 2 describes the respondents' number of "Mother" and "Father" choices on their Parent-Affinity Perception Scales. Sixty percent of the children had more than half of their responses in favor of "Mother." Nine percent had an equal 15 items for "Mother" and 15 items for "Father." Only 31 percent of the respondents had fewer choices for "Mother" and therefore, a preference for "Father" was indicated by this minority.

The "Mother" and "Father" responses on the 22 high and 22 low-quartile respondents were used to analyze which items were discriminating children's perceptions for parental preference. Each item in the scale was analyzed by means of the chi-square test. Only items 1, 2, 5, and 8 failed to show a significant difference in the children's responses indicating parental preference. (See Table 5.) Of the remaining items indicating significant differences, two items were significant at the .05 level, six items were significant at the .01 level, and 18 items were significant at the .001 level.

The Parent-Affinity Perception Scale clearly measures children's perception of parental preference. The fact that 26 out of 30 items showed a significant difference in "Mother"- "Father" responses indicated that parent-child affinity can be measured and that the Parent-Affinity Perception Scale developed for this research is a very powerful instrument for this purpose.

Table 5. Item analysis of children's perception of parental preference based on the high and low quartile responses

Item	Level of significance based on chi-square tests
1. If you wanted money to spend, whom would you ask, your mother or your father for the money?	ns
2. If you needed a parent to come to school with you, whom would you ask to go, your mother or father?	ns
3. If you were to take a plane trip, would you rather have your mother or your father go with you?	.001
4. If you were sick and needed to see a doctor, would you want your mother or your father to take you to the doctor?	.001
5. Whom do you think is the happier person, your mother or your father?	ns
6. If you were unhappy, would you rather talk to your mother or your father about what is making you sad?	.01
7. If you wanted to ask for permission to do something, whom would you ask, your mother or your father?	.05
8. If you needed help with work, would you ask your mother or your father to help you?	ns
9. If you knew a secret, to whom would you rather tell it, your mother or your father?	.001
10. Whom do you feel would help you more if you were in trouble, your mother or your father?	.001
11. Would you rather go to the supermarket to buy food with your mother or your father?	.05
12. If only one of your parents could go on a special trip to the moon, whom would you rather go with you?	.01
13. If you wanted to know how to be very happy, whom would you ask, your mother or father?	.001

Table 5. (Continued)

Item	Level of significance based on Chi-square tests
14. If you had to stay home all day with either your mother or father, whom would you choose to stay with you?	.001
15. With whom would you rather go for a walk, your mother or your father?	.001
16. Whom would you rather have read stories to you, your mother or father?	.001
17. With whom would you rather go swimming, your mother or father?	.01
18. If you were going to visit grandparents, would you rather go to your mother's parents or your father's parents' home?	.001
19. Would you rather have your mother or your father go shopping with you for toys?	.001
20. If you wanted someone to play a game with you, would you ask your mother or your father to play?	.001
21. If you did something wrong, would you rather have your mother or your father correct you?	.001
22. Whom do you want to be like when you grow up, your mother or your father?	.01
23. Whom do your friends like best, their mother or their father?	.01
24. If you were swearing, whom would you rather have hear you, your mother or your father?	.001
25. If you awoke during the night feeling sick, would you rather have your mother or your father help you?	.001
26. If you went to mail a letter, whom would you like to go to the post office with you, your mother or your father?	.001
27. Whom would you like to take you and your friends to a picnic, your mother or your father?	.001

Table 5. (Continued)

Item	Level of significance based on chi-square tests
28. Whom would you rather have take you to the pet shop, your mother or your father?	.01
29. Who is the best parent to you, your mother or your father?	.001
30. Whom do you believe loves you the most, your mother or your father?	.001

Comparative Findings Regarding Parent-Child Affinity

Hypothesis Number 1

There is no significant difference in parental preference as perceived by children.

This hypothesis was rejected by results of the data. Children reported "Mother" as the parent with which to be associated in items of the Parent-Affinity Perception Scale on 55.2 percent of the responses while "Father" obtained 44.8 percent of the responses. Children were shown to discriminate in the parental relationship and show preference for one parent--the mother.

Hypothesis Number 2

There is no significant difference in parent-child affinity in comparison of preschool, third-grade and sixth-grade children.

According to data shown in Table 3, the preschool group showed a preference for father while third-grade and sixth-grade children indicated mother is the preferred parent. A chi-square test value of 26.5 indicated that the mother is the preferred parent by the combined age groups' perceptions and was significant at the .001 level of confidence.

Children at the preschool level chose the father rather than the mother. This preference was significant at the .01 level as the chi-square value was 8.7. In evaluating the third-grade responses, the chi-square value was 1.4 which was not statistically significant. The chi-square value on the sixth-grade children was 32.6 which was significant at the .001 level. Since there was a significant difference in parent-child affinity in the groups' comparison of parental preference, the second hypothesis dealing with age of children was rejected.

Hypothesis Number 3

There is no significant difference between boys and girls in their parental choice.

Data in Tables 3 and 4 reveal the differences in responses for parental preference according to sex. Girls consistently chose "Mother" in response to the items. The chi-square test value of 23.0 was significant at the .001 level of confidence.

A chi-square value of 26.1 indicated that the mother is the preferred parent by boys for the three age levels at the .001 level of confidence.

The chi-square value in comparison of boys' and girls' parental preference for mother rather than father was 16.2 which was significant at the .001 level of confidence. Based on the statistics for girls, boys, and the group of girls and boys, mother clearly was shown as the children's parental preference. These findings do not permit rejection of the third hypothesis as both boys and girls have similar preference for the mother.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

This study of parent-child affinity was conducted for the purpose of determining which parent children perceived as the one they would choose to be associated with in recreational and social activities, personal and moral needs, and places and things. These hypotheses were tested: (1) there is no significant difference in parental preference as perceived by children; (2) there is no significant difference in parent-child affinity in comparison of preschool, third-grade, and sixth-grade children; and (3) there is no significant difference between boys and girls in their parental choice.

The sample used in the study consisted of 90 children and included 15 boys and 15 girls in each of the three age groups: preschool, third grade and sixth grade. Age means of the children were 4 years and 9 months for preschool children, 8 years and 11 months for third-grade children, and 12 years and 2 months for sixth-grade children. All children were from intact families in the Child Development Laboratory at Utah State University or an elementary school in the area of Logan, Utah.

Data were collected during the months of March and April in 1972. The 90 children were tested by an interview schedule. The interview took approximately ten minutes to administer to each individual child. The Parent-Affinity Perception Scale included 30 items which were believed pertinent to

the children's age, sex and experiences to select a parental preference. The response categories for each item were a forced choice of "Mother" or "Father." The scale was developed by the investigator and major professor. Items were reviewed and approved by the investigator's committee.

A test for validity was done to check items for clarity and appropriateness in determining parental preference as perceived by children. Few modifications were made on the scale. Reliability was determined by the test-retest method in a pilot study. The agreement was 92.8 percent when the subjects were tested on two occasions.

The results of the study showed 55.2 percent of responses selected for "Mother" and 44.8 percent of responses selected for "Father." Other findings pointed out that preschool children were the only age group having more responses indicating a preference for "Father." Girls consistently selected mother as their parental preference. Third-grade boys gave a majority of responses in favor of "Mother." Boys in the preschool group selected "Father" in a definite manner; whereas sixth-grade boys selected the father also, but the selection was not as pronounced.

The 90 Parent-Affinity Perception Scale scores were ranked from high to low, and then the high and low quartiles were treated to item analysis to determine which items were discriminating children's perceptions for parental preference. Chi-square tests were used in the item analysis. Analysis of the measuring instrument found 26 of the 30 items discriminated a significant

difference in parental preference at or beyond the .05 level of confidence. The results show that children's perceptions of relationships can be successfully measured and discriminantly tested by the Parent-Affinity Perception Scale.

Discussion

Like the majority of other studies, this research found the mother was generally perceived as children's parental preference. However, one of the major differences noted was the finding that preschool boys showed a preference for the father. Another finding showed that responses for "Mother" increased in frequency as girls became older. Previous studies indicated younger children showed a stronger mother preference than do older children. A reason for the difference might be that children believed girls should be more associated with mothers and boys with fathers, and therefore, they gave responses in that direction. This is contradicted by the pattern of boys preferring the mother at the third-grade level; whereas, preschool and sixth-grade level boys preferred father.

Even though there is a trend in society to encourage and involve both parents in the socialization of children, this research suggested children tend to be more involved with the mother. Perhaps more stress is being given in preparation of girls to be mothers than is given to boys for the role as a father. Another factor might have been that children did not perceive the items as clearly "Mother"- "Father" items; that is, siblings, peers, or other people might have been preferred for the item rather than a parent.

The forced-choice response of either "Mother" or "Father" might not exactly confirm children's exact perceptions or feelings. For some items, children might have had an equal choice of parent--mother or father. Specifically, children might think favorably of both parents and not have a favorite parent in an overall relationship.

Children's perceptions of parental preference might be influenced by past or present conditions in their family life. These may vary according to circumstances and moods. No attempt was made to investigate the personalities of the parents or their adequacy in fulfillment of their parental roles.

Some studies have reported the father as the parent identified in economic situations; however, in this research, responses were equal for whom children would ask for money. (See Table 4, item 1.)

Children might have perceived the father as being more skilled and some items apparently identified him as a competence factor in choosing him as the parent to go with on a plane trip, help with work, accompany on a special trip to the moon, swimming, and playing games. (See Table 4, items 3, 8, 12, 17, and 20.) It was of interest to note the equal responses for mother and father in going for a walk, but in mailing a letter, the father was preferred. (See Table 4, items 15 and 26.) It was not specified in this item whether the child would walk or ride to mail the letter.

Item 18 in Table 4 was concerned with a trip to visit the grandparents' home. The mother's home was more often selected. The response might

have been determined by distance of the home, visiting patterns of the family, as well as maternal grandparent preference.

When children were asked, "Whom do your friends like best, their mother or their father?" their answer might be an indirect way of saying the mother is the preferred parent for them also. (See Table 4, item 23.) Or the answer might pertain to the friend's parent whom the respondent knew better.

Items 1, 2, 5, and 8 were not statistically significant at the .05 level of confidence in determining children's parental preference. (See Table 5.) A reason might have been that the items were too general. In regard to the item for a parent to come to school with a child, most schools encourage both parents to attend conferences and meetings. There are many factors in what would constitute a "happier person" in responding to item 5. "If you needed help with work . . ." did not designate whether the work was for school or a task around the home. If a specific situation had been focused upon, a significant response might have been obtained.

Responses to the items gave some insight of how parents are perceived by children. Much research could be directed to the factors which effected the responses. Speculations of the reasons might otherwise be made in vain. Due to the complexity of parent-child affinity, more areas of the relationship would be of value to investigate because of the needs in child-rearing methods or basic communications and interactions between parents and children.

Conclusions

Children's perceptions of parental preference can be tested and measured. There is a clear pattern for children to select the mother as the parent they would choose to be associated with for recreation, social, personal and moral needs and places and things. These findings showing a preference for the mother rather than the father by both boys and girls further disprove the Oedipus theory.

Boys and girls, in general, chose the mother more often than the father. Girls consistently selected the mother, and the third-grade boys did also. However, sixth-grade boys selected the father for a few more responses than mother, and preschool boys showed a definite pattern in favor of the father.

Children in the preschool group selected the father for more Parent-Affinity Perception Scale items than the mother. Mother was the parental preference of the third and sixth-grade children. Reasons for the variation of boys' parental preference were not investigated by the study.

The Parent-Affinity Perception Scale, developed for the study, proved to be successful in discriminating parental preference as perceived by children. The scale encompassed more areas of the parent-child relationship than many studies have previously attempted and also illustrated the importance of age in the simulated longitudinal design employed.

Recommendations for Further Research

In view of the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. A similar study could be conducted to investigate if children who have a mother who does not work and a female teacher compared to those who have a mother who is employed and a male teacher differ in selecting a parental preference.
2. Investigate other factors which affect parent-child affinity. Some of these factors are: occupations of parents, family size, religious affiliation, ordinal position in the family, social class, individual personalities, and locality as well as age and sex.
3. A comparison of siblings' perceptions of parents might present insightful information in parent-child relationships.
4. Conduct a similar study by redesigning the content of the measuring instrument to obtain verbal responses rather than forced-choice decisions.
5. It would be interesting to study and know what factors affected the differences in boys' perceptions for parental preference between the three age levels.
6. A study designed to answer the question of "why" for a parental preference as well as just the preferred parent would be valuable.
7. A similar study using investigators of different ages and sexes would be interesting to find if results would be different from the present study.

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APPENDIX

PARENT-AFFINITY PERCEPTION SCALE

Name _____

Grade in School _____

Age _____

Sex of Child _____

Number of Siblings 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 or more

Education of Father _____ Occupation of Father _____

Education of Mother _____ Occupation of Mother _____

- M F 1. If you wanted money to spend, whom would you ask, your mother or your father for the money?
- M F 2. If you needed a parent to come to school with you, whom would you ask to go, your mother or father?
- M F 3. If you were to take a plane trip, would you rather have your mother or your father go with you?
- M F 4. If you were sick and needed to see a doctor, would you want your mother or your father to take you to the doctor?
- M F 5. Whom do you think is the happier person, your mother or your father?
- M F 6. If you were unhappy, would you rather talk to your mother or your father about what is making you sad?
- M F 7. If you wanted to ask for permission to do something, whom would you ask, your mother or your father?
- M F 8. If you needed help with work, would you ask your mother or your father to help you?
- M F 9. If you knew a secret, to whom would you rather tell it, your mother or your father?

- M F 10. Whom do you feel would help you more if you were in trouble, your mother or your father?
- M F 11. Would you rather go to the supermarket to buy food with your mother or your father?
- M F 12. If only one of your parents could go on a special trip to the moon, whom would you rather go with you, your mother or father?
- M F 13. If you wanted to know how to be very happy, whom would you ask, your mother or father?
- M F 14. If you had to stay home all day with either your mother or father, whom would you choose to stay with you?
- M F 15. With whom would you rather go for a walk, your mother or your father?
- M F 16. Whom would you rather have read stories to you, your mother or father?
- M F 17. With whom would you rather go swimming, your mother or father?
- M F 18. If you were going to visit grandparents, would you rather go to your mother's parents or your father's parents' home?
- M F 19. Would you rather have your mother or your father go shopping with you for toys?
- M F 20. If you wanted someone to play a game with you, would you ask your mother or your father to play?
- M F 21. If you did something wrong, would you rather have your mother or your father correct you?
- M F 22. Whom do you want to be like when you grow up, your mother or your father?
- M F 23. Whom do your friends like best, their mother or their father?
- M F 24. If you were swearing, whom would you rather have hear you, your mother or your father?
- M F 25. If you awoke during the night feeling sick, would you rather have your mother or your father help you?
- M F 26. If you went to mail a letter, whom would you like to go to the post office with you, your mother or your father?

- M F 27. Whom would you like to take you and your friends to a picnic,
your mother or your father?
- M F 28. Whom would you rather have take you to the pet shop, your mother
or your father?
- M F 29. Who is the best parent to you, your mother or your father?
- M F 30. Whom do you believe loves you the most, your mother or your
father?

VITA

Earlene E. Miller

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: Parent-Child Affinity as Perceived by Children

Major Field: Family and Child Development

Biographical Information:

Personal Data: Born at Langdon, North Dakota, December 28, 1941, daughter of Leon L. and Roberta A. Miller.

Education: Attended elementary school in Hannah, North Dakota; graduated from Hannah High School, in 1959; received Bachelor of Science degree from North Dakota State University in 1963, with a major in home economics education and minors in composite science and English; completed requirements for the Master of Science degree in the field of Child Development at Utah State University in 1972.

Professional Experience: 1963-1964, teacher in home economics at Turtle Lake High School, Turtle Lake, North Dakota; 1964-1968, teacher in Grafton Central High School, Grafton, North Dakota; 1968-1971, teacher in Hallock High School, Hallock, Minnesota.